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Letter dated 23 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 22 October 1996 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Osman Ertuğ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hüseyin E. ÇELEM
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 22 October 1996 from Mr. Osman Ertuğ addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the latest allegations made by the Greek Cypriot side in the letter dated 8 October 1996 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations (A/51/487-S/1996/846 of 11 October 1996).

I would like to recall that previous similar allegations regarding so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in toto in my successive communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 9 August 1996 (see A/50/1020-S/1996/650 of 13 August 1996). Since the present Greek Cypriot charges are no different or credible than the ones previously made, they do not merit a detailed reply. I wish to reiterate briefly, however, that flights within the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State over which the usurper Greek Cypriot regime in the South has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever.

The aim of the Greek Cypriot administration in making allegations regarding the "national airspace of Cyprus" or its "sovereignty and territorial integrity" is, as I have repeatedly pointed out before, to uphold the myth that there is only one sovereign authority in Cyprus, namely the Greek Cypriot side, which has jurisdiction and authority over the whole island. Furthermore, such allegations are designed to create a smokescreen for the Greek Cypriot side's policy of escalation, which involves an intensive campaign of militarization, a plethora of provocations and the refusal to engage in dialogue.

A recent example of this confrontational and negative posture has been the massive joint military exercises staged by Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration that took place from 4 to 9 October 1996. These exercises, code-named "Nikiforos-Toxotis 96" and carried out under the slogans "Greece is here" and "Cyprus Hellenism Is Secure", constituted a serious provocation towards the Turkish Cypriot side and have increased tension in the island. They turned out to be a real show of force in which the Greek Air Force and Navy also took part, and, as also openly declared by the Greek Cypriot leadership, they had an offensive character. Sophisticated weapons were exhibited during these exercises and a warlike atmosphere was created, as the forces of Greece and the Greek Cypriot National Guard sought to put into action the so-called "joint defence doctrine".

I trust that all outside third parties who wish to contribute to the efforts for the finding of a solution to the Cyprus question through negotiations will see to it that the Greek Cypriot side abandons this policy of escalation and tension, which threatens the peace and equilibrium in our region, and takes the necessary steps in the direction of establishing trust and confidence in the island without any delay.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 58, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Osman ERTUĞ
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus